



FROM THE ARCHIVES

On the Sesquicentennial

Nearly 100 years ago, on July 5, 1926, President Calvin Coolidge addressed the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

“Amid all the clash of conflicting interests, amid all the welter of partisan politics, every American can turn for solace and consolation to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States with the assurance and confidence that those two great charters of freedom and justice remain firm and unshaken,” Coolidge stated in Philadelphia.

Americans will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026.

Join the discussion. Check your inbox for details on how to participate in the State Bar of Wisconsin’s effort to collect and publish short essays about the Declaration of Independence. **WL**

SPOTLIGHT

Gambling Probe Ahead of March Madness

Next month, the NCAA Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournaments will tip off once again to crown national champions.

But a cloud has cast a shadow over this year’s contests as 26 people were indicted in January “in connection with an alleged bribery and point-shaving scheme to fix NCAA Division I men’s basketball games and Chinese Basketball Association games,” according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

“The criminal charges we have filed allege the criminal corruption of collegiate athletics through an international conspiracy of NCAA players, alumni, and professional bettors,” said U.S. Attorney David Metcalf. **WL**



QUOTABLE

“I worry about the safety of all our judges.”

– Loretta Rush, chief justice of the Indiana Supreme Court, responding to news that Indiana Superior Court Judge Steven Meyer and his wife were both injured after being shot in their home in January.

“As you work to peacefully resolve more than 1 million cases a year, you must not only feel safe, you must also be safe. Any violence against a judge or a judge’s family is completely unacceptable.”

As of press time, a search was still underway for the suspected shooter. **WL**

DID YOU KNOW?

Florida and Texas Change Law School Accreditation Rules

In January, the Texas Supreme Court changed its bar admission rules, which previously deferred to the American Bar Association (ABA)’s Council on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar in determining the list of approved law schools that graduates must attend to sit for the Texas bar exam.

Moving forward, “approved” law schools are those approved by the Texas Supreme Court, not the Council, giving the court exclusive authority.

“Nearly all U.S. states, excluding a handful that offer an alternative apprenticeship option or state-accredited institutions, require graduation from an ABA-approved law school to sit for the bar exam,” according to the *Syracuse Law Review*.

“Historically, states have delegated the authority of accreditation to the ABA to ensure uniformity and avoid administrative burdens associated with independently evaluating law schools.”

Texas is reportedly the first state to “cut ties” with the ABA accreditation model. Also last month, the Florida Supreme Court amended its bar admission rules to stop relying solely on ABA accreditation as the pathway for law graduates seeking to sit for the Florida bar exam. The Florida Supreme Court can also approve law schools now.

In Wisconsin, an applicant can satisfy the “legal competence” requirement by passing the bar exam and earning a J.D. from an ABA-approved law school or a law school “whose graduates are eligible to take the bar examination of the state, territory or District of Columbia in which the law school is located” so long as they passed the bar exam in that state and were admitted to practice law there.

Sources: Wisconsin SCR 40.04; Texas Supreme Court; Florida Supreme Court; *ABA Journal*. **WL**

BY THE NUMBERS

1.37 million

The number of lawyers in the U.S., according to the American Bar Association’s 2025 National Lawyer Population Survey, which notes the number of lawyers increased significantly for the first time since 2020 (1.38% increase). The report also noted that the 2024 graduating class was 12% larger than any other class since 2012.

Other findings:

- State with the highest number of active lawyers: New York (190,015).
- State with the lowest number of active lawyers: North Dakota (1,656).
- Number of Wisconsin resident lawyers: 15,116.
- Percentage of U.S. women lawyers in 2015: 34.7%
- Percentage of U.S. women lawyers in 2025: 41.3%.
- Percentage of U.S. African-American lawyers in 2015: 4.7%
- Percentage of U.S. African-American lawyers in 2025: 4.9%. **WL**